

**To:** Colaizzi, Jennifer C.[Colaizzi.Jennifer@epa.gov]  
**From:** StClair, Christie  
**Sent:** Wed 8/12/2015 12:42:07 AM  
**Subject:** RE: Questions to Region 8 By Topic

Thank you!

**Christie St. Clair**

Office of Public Affairs

Environmental Protection Agency

Washington, DC

o: 202-564-2880

m: 202-768-5780

**From:** Colaizzi, Jennifer C.  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 11, 2015 8:39 PM  
**To:** StClair, Christie  
**Subject:** Fwd: Questions to Region 8 By Topic

For your running list of Qs

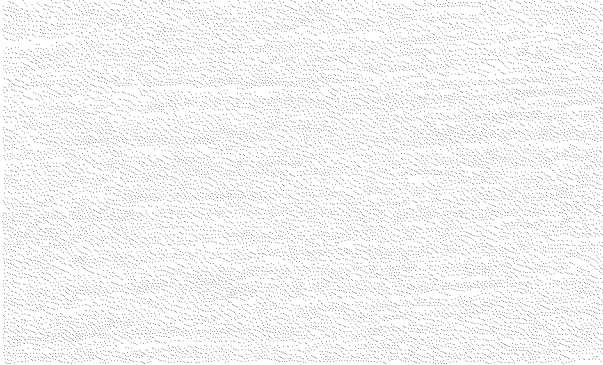
Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Jenkins, Laura Flynn" <Jenkins.Laura@epa.gov>  
**Date:** August 11, 2015 at 8:36:51 PM EDT  
**To:** "Harrison, Melissa" <Harrison.Melissa@epa.gov>, "Colaizzi, Jennifer C." <Colaizzi.Jennifer@epa.gov>  
**Cc:** "Mylott, Richard" <Mylott.Richard@epa.gov>, "Smith, Ebonie"

<Smith.Ebonie@epa.gov>, "Williams, Caroline" <Williams.Caroline@epa.gov>

**Subject: Questions to Region 8 By Topic**



Melissa and Jennifer:

In case this is of any use to you in developing future messaging, below I a list of the general questions we've received in Region 8.

I thought it might shed some light on what the public is interested in knowing – at least those who've contacted us.

Regards,

Laura Jenkins

Media Officer

USEPA-Region 8

1595 Wynkoop St.

Mailcode: 8-OC

Denver, CO 80202

Landline: 303-312-6256

Cell: 202-360-8453

## QUESTIONS BY TOPIC

### Discharge Status:

- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Where is the leading edge of the plume?
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Is contaminated water still being discharged from the mine?
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ How much water is leaking from mine now, i.e., what is the current discharge rate?
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ What is the total volume discharged to date?
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ What is happening with/to the water that is currently discharging from the mine?
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Can you explain the treatment process currently being used at the discharge site in plain English, e.g., what is EPA doing here and how does it work?
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Does losing the yellow color mean that the dissolved heavy metals are gone or could they still be there even though the water is no longer yellow?

### Impacts on Human Health, Drinking Water Systems/Intakes and Populations Served:

- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ What are you doing to make sure people have clean water supplies in Navajo Country?

- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ How do I know if my drinking water is safe?

- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ How many systems have been impacted by this incident?

- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Which specific systems have been impacted?

- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ How many intakes at each of these systems have been shut down?

- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ What is the population served for each of the impacted systems?

- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ How many people use water from the Animas River for drinking water?

- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ When will the river be reopened for drinking water, agriculture, and recreation?

- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ If tests indicate the water has returned to pre-incident levels, where is the divide in re-opening the river?

### **Impacts on Agriculture:**

- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ To what extent is water from the Animas River used to irrigate crops?

- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ What are the impacts on the agricultural community, e.g., crops and livestock?

- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Have any food crops been impacted to-date from this spill?

- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ What types of crops are grown in the impacted areas?

### **Background:**

- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ What was happening at the Gold King Mine the day this incident began?

- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ What pre-incident assessment docs are available?

- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Is there any precedent for this type of spill?

- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Have there been any previous spills of this magnitude?

- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ What is the scope of pollution from hard rock mines?

### **Potential Future Impacts:**

- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ How significant of a threat do these types of mine present in the future in terms of the potential for mine waste potentially contaminating waterways?

- The Bureau of Land Management reports suggest that once sediments settle, it can take waterways years to recover, e.g., each heavy rain churns up sediment and carries it further downstream. Can EPA speak to the validity of these suggestions and what is being done to mitigate these risk?

- Will the sediments become a perpetual problem as water continues to churn up sediments during heavy rain and in areas of white water?

- What is EPA doing to protect Butte, MT's Silver Bow Creek?

### **Sampling and Analysis:**

- What is the geography/range of the water quality data mentioned in the EPA statements?

- Who is conducting sampling, where, and on what schedule?

- Is EPA conducting air sampling? Can these contaminants become airborne?

- What is the turn-around time on samples?

- From a scientific perspective, what contaminants have been found and at what concentrations?

- What is the plain English interpretation of the sampling results, e.g., is there a danger to human health from exposure or ingestion?

- When EPA refers to “pre-incident” levels, to what does this refer? Where, when, and why was testing previously done and by whom?

#### **Technical Assistance Offers:**

- Who can businesses contact if they have technology or expertise that might assist in response efforts?

#### **Public Comments and Input:**

- What number can citizens call if they have questions about this incident?
- Why isn't the EPA public hotline being widely publicized?
- Where, specifically, can citizens leave formal comments regarding this incident?
- How do I know if my vacation destination has been impacted by this incident?

#### **Financial Claims:**

- For what types of losses can I be compensated?
- What is the process for filing a claim for financial compensation?

- Who pays for financial losses to private citizens, businesses, and communities?
- How many claims has EPA received?
- How much does EPA expect to pay out in claims?

#### **Press Issues:**

- Are all of the Press Calls telephone only or will there be a place for the Press to gather for in-person questions?
- Now that Administrator McCarthy has spoken publicly about the incident, what can you tell us about White House briefings?

#### **Accountability:**

- Who, specifically, is responsible for the release?
- Will EPA release the names of those on-site when the incident began?
- Will anyone be fired as a result of this incident? If so, who?
- Will EPA be charged punitive damages the way BP and other companies have been charged?



### **Other Government Agency Questions:**

- Who at EPA should other governmental agencies contact if they have questions or need information?